

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration, reexamination, and allowance of this patent application are respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Allowable Subject Matters

Applicant gratefully acknowledges the indication at pages 1 and 3 of the Office Action that the subject matters of Claims 8 and 27 are free of the prior art. By way of the foregoing amendments, Claims 8 and 27 have been placed into independent form by the incorporation of their subject matters into Claims 1 and 20, from which they depend, respectively. All of the remaining claims depend from either of Claims 1 or 20 and, therefore, all the claims are in allowable form, including the previously withdrawn claims which should be rejoined with those previously examined.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

At page 2 of the Office Action, Claims 1-3, 20-22, 41, and 42 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as reciting subject matters that are allegedly identically disclosed in *Sherman*. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of these rejections.

While Applicant still strongly disagrees with the negative patentability characterizations of the claimed subject matters contained in the Office Action, especially the blatant misinterpretation of the claim term 'recirculation rate' and the clearly erroneous application of the guidance of the M.P.E.P., Applicant has elected to place allowable Claims 8 and 27 in independent form; accordingly, the rejections of the claims are moot. Applicant expressly reserves the right to file one or more continuation and/or divisional applications to further pursue the subject matters described in this application.

Conclusion

Applicant respectfully submits that this patent application is in condition for allowance. An early indication of the allowability of this application is therefore respectfully solicited.

If Mr. Rodriguez believes that a telephone conference with the undersigned would expedite passage of the present patent application to issue, he is invited to call on the number below.

It is not believed that extensions of time are required, beyond those that may otherwise be provided for in accompanying documents. However, if additional extensions of time are necessary to prevent abandonment of this application, then such extensions of time are hereby petitioned under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a), and the undersigned hereby authorizes any fees for said petition be charged to our deposit account 50-2821.

Respectfully submitted,

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